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**STATE AWARDS PROPOSITION 63 FUNDING TO EXPAND MENTAL
HEALTH SERVICES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY**
Los Angeles County to Receive the Largest Share of Funding

LOS ANGELES – More than 18,000 adults and children in Los Angeles County could receive mental health services in the current fiscal year through new funding from the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA), the California State Department of Mental Health Director Stephen W. Mayberg announced today.

Joining Los Angeles Department of Mental Health Director Marvin J. Southard and other community and mental health leaders in Los Angeles' Skid Row, Mayberg formally announced the approval of approximately \$70 million in funding this year from the MHSA – also known as Proposition 63 -- for local community mental health services in Los Angeles. The funds will be used to start new programs and expand existing programs for people with severe mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and major depression. The goal of the new services is to help people avoid jail, hospital emergency rooms, and homelessness by getting them the help they need to have full and productive lives.

"Throughout the state, this new funding will mark the beginning of the end of the downward spiral for many people who have been searching for a path to a more meaningful life," said Mayberg. "The people who live and work in communities like this one have long known the dire consequences of untreated mental illness, both for the individual and for the community. Now we have the means to put an end to the cycle."

"We are excited to finally have these new programs and services within reach," added Southard. "Our hope is that in a year from now, Skid Row will be transformed from a symbol of despair to a symbol of hope."

MHSA-funded programs throughout the county of Los Angeles will include:

- Around-the-clock counseling and support;
- Rental subsidies and help finding permanent, affordable housing;
- Treatment for alcohol or drug problems;
- Drop-in centers and counseling for teens leaving foster care;
- Counseling for families with children who have a severe emotional disorder; and
- Support to help people rebuild their lives after spending time on the streets.

For a complete list of funded programs and services, go to www.lacdmh.org/stp.

Like other counties, Los Angeles involved local stakeholders – including consumers of mental health services and their families, law enforcement, social service agencies, and faith-based organizations – in the program design and planning process.

Proposition 63, passed by California voters in November 2004, provides mental health funding through an additional 1 percent tax on incomes over \$1 million. Los Angeles is the second county to be approved for funding, and will receive a larger share than any other county in the state. For more information about the MHSA, go to www.dmh.ca.gov/.

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